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25 September 1956

NSC BRIEFING

SPAİN'S RELATIONS WITH THE USSR

- I. This week, after ~~some~~ 20 years of residence in the USSR, some 500 Spanish civilians ~~were said~~^{ARE SAILING} from Odessa homeward-bound. These are ~~the~~^{A FEW} of some 5,000 Spanish refugee children, now grown to adulthood, who had been evacuated to the USSR during the Spanish Civil War.
- A. Another 1,000 Spanish refugees have also been granted exit-permits by the USSR and are expected to follow soon.
- B. News of this movement has added substance to rumors, current during the past year, that Spain and the USSR may resume diplomatic relations.
- II. These rumors have consistently stated that General Franco has set two conditions which the USSR would have to meet before any discussion of renewed diplomatic relations.
- A. The first of these preconditions is return of the gold bullion, valued by the Spanish at some \$500 million, which the Republican government shipped to the USSR during the Civil War.
- B. The second is repatriation of the handful of Spanish "Blue Division" prisoners (perhaps 70) still believed to be in Soviet hands.

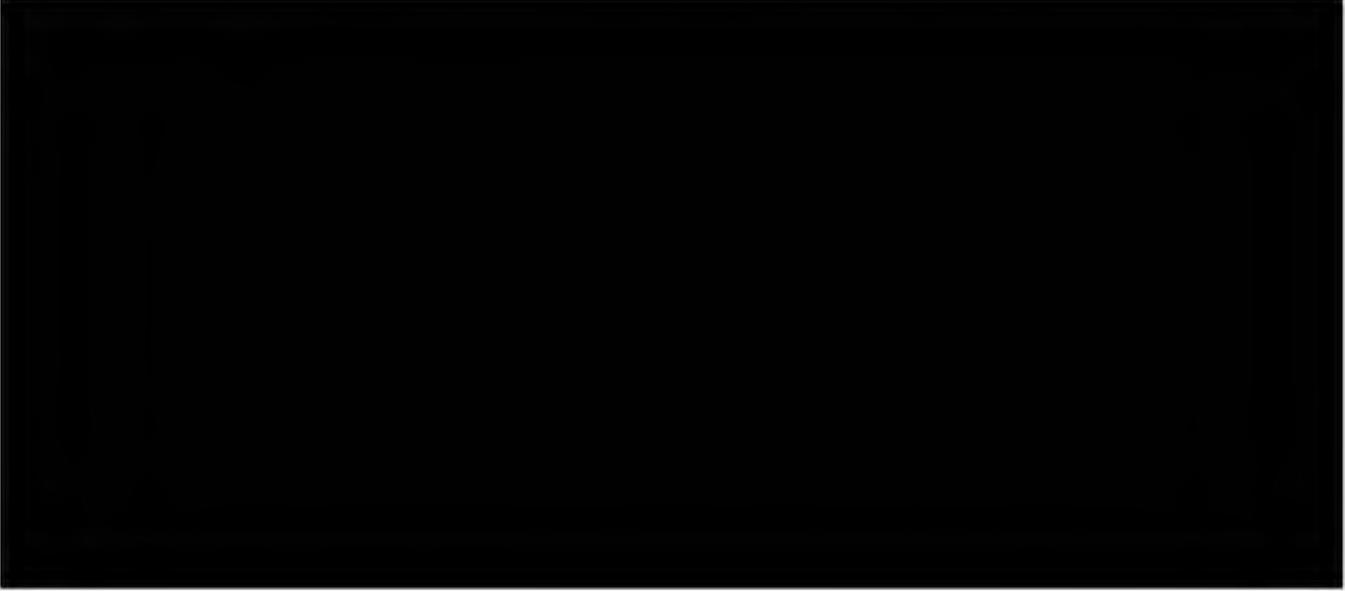
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- III. Last week, however, we were informed [REDACTED] that the Spanish
25X1C [REDACTED] had received "two or three calls in recent
25X1C months" [REDACTED] to discuss the establishment
of diplomatic relations.

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- IV. In point of fact, Soviet scientists have attended a number of meetings convened in Spain this year, so that this "straw", at least, is of little value as an indication of Soviet intent.
- A. Thus far, we have no indications that either of Franco's reported preconditions--return of the gold and the Blue Division remnants--are about to be met by the USSR.
- B. We therefore feel that it will be a fair time in the future before Spain and the USSR actually resume formal diplomatic relations.
- C. Further, when and if such relations are resumed, we do not believe that Spain's relations with the US or the Spanish Government's anti-Communist policy will be affected.

